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Four Schools to Receive Funding to Operate School-Based Health Centers

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, in collaboration with the Arkansas Department of Health, selected four Arkansas schools to each receive \$542,000 over a five-year period to implement School-Based Health Centers.

The centers listed below will be fully operational during the 2021-2022 school year and will provide health and wellness services to students, staff, and families.

- Darby Junior High School in the Fort Smith School District
- Fountain Lake Elementary School in the Fountain Lake School District
- Jessieville Elementary School in the Jessieville School District
- Sheridan High School in the Sheridan School District

"Awarding these grants could not have come at a better time," ADE Secretary Johnny Key said. "With our schools facing unprecedented health challenges this school year, these grants will give these four schools the opportunity to expand their partnerships, complete renovations, and be prepared to offer health services at the beginning of the next school year. The services provided will not only help schools better assist students, they also will provide essential care to teachers and families."

These four schools join 36 others around the state that have received state grant funding over the years to operate School-Based Health Centers. The centers remove physical and mental health barriers by offering these services on campus. As a result, academic achievement improves and the number of absences is reduced due to health issues.

Grant applicants undergo a comprehensive, competitive application process that includes internal and external reviews and an onsite visit. Grant awardees partner with local health providers to implement three main components of School-Based Health Centers: physical health services, mental and behavioral health services, and school health outreach programs. Many centers also offer additional services, such as oral health and optometry services.

To learn more about the School-Based Health Center program, visit <https://bit.ly/2Rw2oit>.

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